

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 H-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 INT-05 PA-01 PRS-01

USIA-06 AID-05 /046 R

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MASERU

INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 007458

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, LT, SF

SUBJECT: LESOTHO MINER UNREST

REF: MASERU 15 NOTAL

1. LESOTHO EMBASSY OFFICIAL KONKA MOLAPO PROVIDED INFORMATION TO DEPT. SUPPLEMENTING PRESS REPORTS AND REPORT REFTEL REGARDING PROBLEM WITH BASOTHO MINERS IN SOUTH AFRICA OVER DEFERRED PAY.

2. MOLAPO CONFIRMED PRESS REPORT THAT TWO GOL MINISTERS SENT TO VAAL REEF MINE TO EXPLAIN NEW PROCEDURE TO MINERS
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WERE BADLY RECEIVED BY MINERS. (TWO MINISTERS WERE

SEKHONYANA OF FINANCE AND MOITSE OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY.) MOLAPO REPORTED THAT SA CHAMBER OF MINES PRESIDENT A.W.S. SCHUMANN HAD SENT TELEGRAM TO PM JONATHAN SUSPENDING ALL RECRUITMENT OF BASOTHO MINERS. JONATHAN HAD RESPONDED TO SCHUMANN URGING MINE COMPANIES NOT TO PROCEED WITH SUSPENSION, ARGUING THAT HE COULD NOT SUSPEND LAW PASSED BY LEGISLATURE, THAT TROUBLE HAD RESULTED FROM MISINFORMATION SUPPLIED BY MINE OFFICIALS, THAT FACTION FIGHTS WITH XHOSAS HAD BEEN QUOTE ENGINEERED UNQUOTE,

AND STATING THAT GOL WOULD CONSIDER SUSPENSION QUOTE HOSTILE ACT. UNQUOTE.

3. MOLAPO INTERPRETED WHAT HE CONSIDERED TO BE DELIBERATE EFFORT ON PART OF SOUTH AFRICANS TO DRIVE BASOTHO MINERS OUT OF SOUTH AFRICA AS RESPONSE IN PART TO RECENT SPEECH CRITICAL OF SOUTH AFRICA DELIVERED BY JONATHAN AT PRESENTATION OF OAU MEDAL TO LUTHULI'S WIDOW (MASERU 1392). MOLAPO SAID, QUOTE WE TALK, THEY ACT. UNQUOTE. HE SAID GOL CONSIDERED DEFERRED WAGE SCHEME TO BE IN BEST INTERESTS OF MINERS, WHO WOULD RECEIVE 6 PERCENT INTEREST ON WAGES AND FREE MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS AND CARE FOR THEMSELVES AND FAMILIES, AND IN BEST INTERESTS OF DEVELOPMENT OF NATION. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION, HE DISCOUNTED POSSIBILITY THAT MINERS' DISAFFECTION WITH DEFERRED PAY SCHEME REFLECTED LACK OF CONFIDENCE IN JONATHAN'S GOVERNMENT.

4. MOLAPO SAID HE WOULD BE TALKING WITH PM JONATHAN BY TELEPHONE EVENING JAN. 9 AND WOULD CONTINUE KEEP DEPT INFORMED. HE ADDED THAT FOREIGN MINISTER KOTSOKOANE AND COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER MOITSE WOULD BE PRESENTING REPORT ON PROBLEM TO AFRICAN-AMERICAN DIALOGUES IN KINSHASA AND WOULD BE URGING U.S. LEGISLATORS ATTENDING DIALOGUE TO COME TO LESOTHO AFTERWARD TO SEE PROBLEM FOR THEMSELVES. HE ONCE AGAIN MADE RECURRENT GOL PITCH FOR MORE AID TO PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT IN LESOTHO TO REDUCE NEED OF BASOTHO WORKERS TO SEEK WORK IN SOUTH AFRICA. DEPT OFF ONCE AGAIN REVIEWED WHAT WE ARE DOING AND INDICATED CONSTRAINTS. CONFIDENTIAL

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